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## **New TB Testing Policy**

The Arkansas Department of Health has adopted a new TB policy. As of July 1, 2012, ADH will discontinue skin testing as the main screening tool for TB. A new test called T-Spot will be the new screening of choice. The T-Spot test will require a blood sample that will be interpreted by a lab. ADH has chosen to use the T-Spot method of testing over the traditional skin test method because it is more reliable and it can prevent unnecessary treatment (chest x-ray, medication). Skin tests will still be available for young children. Contact your local health unit administrator for more information.

## **200 Youth STAND UP, SPEAK OUT and SEIZE an opportunity TO BE HEARD!**

It was storming and spring break week but on March 21, youth from every region of Arkansas showed up at the Capitol to speak out on tobacco prevention efforts. The BEAT Tobacco Control group worked in collaboration with Y.E.S. Teams (Youth Extinguishing Smoking) to host "YES On The Hill" tobacco prevention education training in Little Rock.

Breakout sessions at the three-day event focused on how a bill becomes a law, the basics of the Master Tobacco Settlement Agreement, and how to package information for younger audiences.

The event resulted in 200 youth rallying in the Capitol rotunda to show their support for tobacco prevention and refusal skills. After the training was completed and the last sign was put away, the youth who attended stated the "YES on the Hill" training was a great way for them to be able to get their

being blatantly disregarded."

SPU (Special Prevention Unit) youth leaders from both Little River and Miller Counties attended and helped facilitate the three - day training.

Press conferences were held to allow students to voice recommendations for new or stronger tobacco penalties for existing laws.

### **The Yes on the Hill 2012 Legislative Summit Recommendations :**

- No Smoking in any public place. Close exemptions in Act 8 of 2006.
- Harsher punishment (fine) for Act 811 of 2011. Increase fine for smoke-free car law up to \$500.00
- No smoking while pregnant. First offense court ordered cessation class for mother-to-be to protect both the mother and unborn child.

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voices heard and their ideas taken seriously.

Tonya Domokos, BEAT Tobacco Control, project director stated "It was eye-opening to hear the youth talk about all the tobacco laws they knew were on the books, but still



## H.O.P.E. Coalition performs “Color Me Green”

For the third year running, local organizations and businesses in Hempstead County have put on their dancing shoes and taken to the stage, all for the sake of teaching youngsters the importance of good nutrition.

On Thursday, March 15<sup>th</sup>, several members of the Hempstead County HOPE Coalition performed their rendition of “Color Me Green”. The group had almost as much fun performing as the Clinton Primary School students had watching. “Color Me” is the brainchild of Renee Sells, RN, Clinton Primary School Nurse. Ms. Sells

wrote a grant several years ago in an effort to introduce and provide fresh produce to the primary school students. She developed the innovative idea of presenting these fruits and vegetables in an assembly featuring a different color each month. Each assembly includes a community or business group performing a skit relevant to the featured produce. Through this grant the community has had the opportunity to reach out

and be involved with the school and address some of their needs.

March was “Color Me Green” and HOPE Coalition members went all out. In the illustration, bad lollipop kids, dancing chocolate, and candy canes tried to lead Lucky the dancing leprechaun astray. Luckily green fruit and vegetables were on hand to save the day and Lucky the dancing leprechaun’s rainbow could once again shine.



## DASH Coalition Growing a Healthy Community

**Town Hall Meeting:** The DASH Coalition hosted a Town Hall Meeting on Underage Drinking on April 5th. Approximately 20 parents and grandparents, as well as the Fordyce Police Chief and several officers attended. Arkansas Children’s Hospital gave a wonderful presentation on injury prevention regarding alcohol use and teen driving.

Based on comments from participants, Ms. Emmerson, trauma nurse for UAMS, made a lasting impression. For a visual effect, she carried in a body bag and unrolled it to reveal several instruments she uses on accident patients. Feedback suggested that it was her no-nonsense approach of the medical procedures that had the young participants talking about wearing their

seat belt and thinking twice before drinking and driving. Immediately after the presentation, a student participant posted on facebook that she was wearing her seat belt on the way home.

The event was also used as a recruitment tool to develop a local committee to address similar issues. Several people signed up.

**Farmer’s Market News:** The Dallas County Farmer’s Market will kick off their inaugural market on Saturday morning June 2<sup>nd</sup> at the Dallas County Courthouse on 4th street in Fordyce. The Farmers Market Committee is currently recruiting vendors for produce, crafts, flowers, homemade jams and jellies, breads and baked goods. Anything a local individual has made or grown will be considered. All vendors will be provided a canopy for shade at no cost.

Farmers can continue to sell during the week as produce is available.

**Health Fair:** “Let Good Health Win in 2012” was the name of the DASH health fair held March 10 in Fordyce. Over 275 people attended to take advantage of the free health screenings and information. Screenings were provided for cholesterol, blood pressure, glucose, prostate, bone density, hearing, and HIV.

Entertainment was provided by a variety of talented people from all over the county. Anthony Jackson did an excellent job of emceeing the event.



## Baby Safety Showers

Montgomery County held its first Safety Baby Shower on Thursday, March 29<sup>th</sup> at the Mt. Ida Civic Center. Six expectant mothers and a couple of guests were present to learn about injury prevention.

A Safety Baby Shower is a learning party for pregnant women and their support persons. It has a festive, shower-themed atmosphere, complete with refreshments and games. Shower gifts are presented to each family, and include safety products that correspond to the educational themes (e.g. smoke alarms

and car seats).

Topics at the showers include home safety, safe sleep for infants, infant crying and the prevention of Shaken Baby Syndrome, and child passenger safety.



Bonnie Carr, RHS, and Allison Rose Bliss from Children's Hospital presented the information to those in attendance. Kim Adams, health unit administrator, was also in attendance to assist with registration and appointments for car seats installation training. Ms. Carr meets individually with parents to instruct and install the car seats provided through the program.

Funding for the Safety Baby Showers for Montgomery and Pike County is provided through a grant from New York Life.

## CHNS & CHPS and the School Health Index

On March 6, several SWR Community Health Nurse Specialists (CHNS) and Promotion Specialist (CHPS) attended a School Health Index (SHI) Training in Little Rock. Christi Kay, the facilitator, gave an overview of SHI. Participants learned the benefits of SHI and how to utilize it online. They also practiced completing a portion of SHI. The training provided beneficial information to help CHNS when working with school district wellness committees.

On January 23<sup>rd</sup>, each of the 16 Educational Cooperatives in Arkansas hosted a Compressed Interactive Video regarding the emergency rules on Glucagon administration in Schools. Paula Smith, State School Nurse Consultant, was the presenter. Each school nurse received 2.5 CNE's for attending. This new law affects schools and applies to those students suffering from Type I Diabetes. This session provided

the required training for an unlicensed volunteer to be able to administer glucagon in an emergency when a school nurse is not available. School nurses are responsible for training volunteers in each school district.

Edie Greenwood, CHNS, presented a program for at-risk youth on teen dating. The program is a collaboration among the Juvenile Court, Southwest Mental Health Center, Arkansas Department of Health, and other health related agencies.

Greenwood included teen dating violence using CDC's "Choose Respect" best practice program materials. She also showed a video from CDC entitled, "Causing Pain: Real Stories of Dating Abuse and Violence." The group discussed different types of dating violence and some of the unintended conse-

quences such as STD's and unwanted pregnancy. Greenwood provided national statistics on teen dating violence and discussed how the rates for drug, alcohol and tobacco use are more than twice as high as girls who report physical dating violence or sexual abuse.

The youth had an open discussion to compare and brainstorm healthy and unhealthy relationships, refusal skills, and decision making skills.

On March 12, Greenwood presented to UAMS off-campus BSN Program students at UACCH in Hope. The presentation included information on risk factors and consequences for childhood obesity, Type II diabetes, pediatric blood pressure, Acts 1220 and 811, and how to perform a BMI assessment.





## SOUTHWEST REGION HOMETOWN HEALTH

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## Tornado Season in Arkansas: Are you prepared?

Tornados are a violently rotating column of air extending from a thunderstorm to the ground. They are capable of destroying homes and vehicles and can cause fatalities. Tornadoes may appear nearly transparent until dust and debris are picked up or a cloud forms in the funnel. The average tornado moves SW to NE but have been known to move in any direction. The average forward speed is 30 mph but may vary from stationary to 70 mph and have rotating winds in excess of 250 mph.

Tornadoes can occur at any time of the year, however, in the southern states, tornado season peaks in March through May, while peak months in the northern states are during the late spring and early summer. They also are more likely to occur between 3 and 9pm but can occur at any time.

### HOW TO PREPARE

Develop a plan for you and your family at home, work, school and when outdoors and practice this plan. The Federal Emergency Management Agency offers planning tips on its Internet site: [www.fema.gov/pte/displan.htm](http://www.fema.gov/pte/displan.htm)

Identify a safe place to take shelter. Information on how to build a "Safe Room" in your home or school is available from the Federal Emergency Management Agency at [www.fema.gov/mit/saferoom](http://www.fema.gov/mit/saferoom).

Conduct frequent tornado drills each tornado season.

Keep a highway map nearby to follow storm movement from weather bulletins.

Have a NOAA Weather Radio with a warning alarm tone and battery backup to receive watches and warnings. Listen to the radio and television for weather information.

## Around the Region

**Hot Spring County** hosted their Town Hall meeting in March.

There were two speakers, a high school senior from Lakeside High School who shared his "gruesome addiction" and Casey Bright from Garland County Cares who spoke on the emerging use of Alcopops among high school students. Both were great presentations and the participants were shocked about what they learned. Below is the link to the Hot Springs County Now website where you can hear the story from the high school student. [www.hscnow.net](http://www.hscnow.net)

The **Nevada County** Health Unit hosted a retirement celebration and community reception for J.D. Dougan, IT Specialist on March 16 from 2:00-4:00. Finger foods were

provided by the staff of the Nevada County Health Unit. Janet McAdams presented a plaque to J.D. to recognize his 12+ years of service on behalf of the SW Regional Team. The Nevada County Health Unit presented him with a money tree. There were several people from the agency and community in attendance.



In celebration of Public Health Week, **Columbia County** Health Unit displayed a bulletin board promoting breastfeeding. It was designed and constructed by Patsy Johnson, LPN. The colorful and informative board entitled "The Buttons and Bows of Breastfeeding" lists the many advantages of breastfeeding for mom and baby.